



President's Message

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As we move into 2022, it is with a heavy heart that I write my address for this issue of BERITA. We had faced 2021 grappling with the ups and downs of the pandemic. To add to it, before we can even end the year, our country is assaulted with an unending deluge of rainfall which resulted in the massive flooding of various states of this country with the Klang Valley and parts of Pahang being the most affected.

At the time of writing, the flood waters have not receded; in fact, it is still rising in certain areas. Visions of the destruction brought about by the floods bring sorrow to one's mind. The full extent of the damage will only be known when the flood waters subside. The loss of lives is truly regrettable, not to mention the loss of property. For some, it may be a loss that is irrecoverable, especially with the double blow brought on by both the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the floods.

Accusations abound of officials and politicians being the ones responsible for this calamity. This is a normal reaction as

the losses suffered are significant. Instead of pointing fingers, many in the population went to ground in offering assistance to the victims. Whether in terms of man power, food items and other necessities, places of refuge and many more, we never saw a shortage of these.

Our MMA Volunteer Corps swung into action almost immediately which saw our first team of volunteers going to ground almost overnight. The scenes opening up to them were enough to tug at anyone's heart. At the time of writing, it was the third day since our volunteers first rolled up their sleeves and I am glad to say that they are still going strong with more of our medical doctors volunteering their services including going out of state to offer assistance.

Our own medical fraternity was not spared the wrath as many medical clinics were swamped by the forces of nature. Images of clinics being fully flooded are being shared on social media. For many, it will not be a matter of cleaning up before offering their medical services once again, but rather of throwing



Community effort



Distribution centre for supplies



MMA Volunteer Corps unloading supplies for flood victims

everything out and deciding on how to start their clinics from scratch. Such is the level of destruction noted.

In order to assist our affected brothers and sisters, MMA has started on a donation drive among the medical fraternity, an effort which I label as “By the Fraternity, For the Fraternity”. The proceeds from this will be solely for the use of medical doctors whose clinics have been destroyed by the floods. Whilst our assistance may not be enough to assist in the resetting up of the clinics anew, we hope that our aid will at least provide some well needed sustenance for the affected doctors.

Not forgetting the ongoing efforts to assist affected members of the public, we had also set up another fund for donations which is to be used for the other victims of the floods.

Another item of the day which received a lot of media coverage, were the amendments to Act 342, which is the Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act 1988. It has been around for more than three decades and warrant a revision if it is to be useful for its intended purpose as the world has changed much since it was first enacted.

After the Emergency Ordinance has been revoked, the Ministry of Health found itself without an Act which can allow it to effectively manage the COVID-19 pandemic as far as enforcement of the SOPs are concerned. Having a measly Rm1000 fine does sound like a joke to those who can afford to treat the amount as peanuts. An example would be the 100-Day Malaysian Family Aspiration Programme at KLCC where the organisers were fined the maximum of Rm1000. Big corporates and mega business establishments who flout the SOPs will also not even blink an eye to this meagre penalty.

With the omicron variant making its rounds in the world, there is an urgent need to revise this Act and hence proposed amendments to the Act was done and the bill was to be presented for a debate in parliament.

However, it started on a wrong footing when high fines of up to a million MYR were proposed. The public rose up in arms and so did the medical fraternity when it was revealed that parts of the act relating to the practice of medicine was to be amended as well.

The fact that there had been no proper stakeholder engagement held before the tabling of the document was done did not sit well with the medical fraternity. MMA had then voiced its objection and suggested for a special parliamentary session to further discuss on the proposed amendments.

A total of six experts including our Hon. General Secretary and myself were called up by the Parliamentary Select Committee on Health, Science and Innovation to give our views on the proposed amendments to the Act before the bill is to be debated in the special parliamentary session which was held for this purpose alone. All six experts unanimously expressed the view that the bill be postponed till the next Parliamentary sitting in February 2022 and that

further engagement with the stakeholders should be done prior to that. And as known to all of you, it has since been officially postponed till the next Parliamentary sitting and our Hon. Health Minister had announced that the proposed amendments will be made public prior to it being tabled in Parliament.



Wondaleaf FRHAM endorsement and launch

A launch of the Wondaleaf Unisex Condom was done on 11 December 2021 by Her Highness Tengku Munazirah Tengku Abdul Samad Shah Al-Haj, a member of the Selangor State Royalty in conjunction with World AIDS Day at an event hosted by the Federation of Reproductive Health Associations, Malaysia. The Wondaleaf Unisex Condom is an invention by one of our own doctors, Dr John Tang Ing Ching from Sarawak. Innovation in healthcare should be further encouraged among our Malaysian doctors.

Looking forward to 2022 as the year in which we will finally get to see the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. **BMMMA**